

ADDRESS

TO THE

Friends of Religion

IN BEHALF OF THE

AMERICAN EDUCATION SOCIETY.

Andover

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ADDRESS.

THE Directors of the AMERICAN EDUCATION SOCIETY have been engaged for several years past, in applying the charity of the christian public, for the promotion of the great object proposed in the formation of this charitable institution.

This Society is but the medium, through which public beneficence reaches and effects its object ; it is merely the almoner of public bounty. It is therefore manifest, that while, on the one hand, the Directors look with the deepest interest, to the effects of their labours ; they must, on the other hand, look with no less interest, to the friends of religion in the community, for those supplies which their operations continually demand. For, it ought to be distinctly understood and remembered by all, that the objects of this Society are no local or private concern. Its benefits do not rest upon its members, or its Directors. They individually incur sacrifices, and make efforts, in attending to its concerns, and watching over its interests ; for which they expect no earthly remuneration. It is the honour of Christ, in the advancement and prosperity of his Church, which stands forth as the object of our labours and charities in this understanding.

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The Directors therefore, do not appear before the public to ask alms for themselves, or for the promotion of any private interest ; but they present the Education Society to public attention, as an association, duly organized and prepared to receive the fruits of christian charity, and appropriate them to purposes, in which every friend of Christ must feel an interest. It is the cause of every minister, of every church, and of every sincere friend of Christ, which we plead. The object in view, can never be accomplished by individual exertion. It requires the vigorous cooperation of the friends of the Redeemer. Therefore, chris-

tian brethren, we ask you to unite with us in furnishing ministers, for the destitute churches and congregations in our country ; and in preparing messengers, who may go forth and declare the unsearchable riches of Christ, in the destitute regions of our world.

But, while this Society offers itself as the channel, through which christian charity may flow and take effect ; it seems proper, that the public should be made acquainted with *the result of its past labours* ; that they should understand its *methods of proceeding* ; and that they should take a fair view of the *importance of its object*. For, in this way only can they be enabled to judge, how far it merits confidence, and affords encouragement for increasing support.—To these points then, the attention of all the friends of the Saviour, and of man, is respectfully solicited.

From a statement published by the officers of the Society, soon after its institution, it appears that, “ during the summer of 1815, a few individuals in Boston, becoming deeply impressed by the necessity of greater efforts than had heretofore been made, to increase the number of pious and learned ministers ; invited a number of clergymen from neighbouring towns to meet with them for consultation. At this meeting which was held the last week in July, and opened with prayer, a more full exhibition of the deficiency of qualified christian teachers in our land, clothed the subject with a solemn interest ; and impressed on every one present a strong conviction, that all good men are called to unite in immediate and vigorous efforts to provide a remedy. Under this impression it was voted to be expedient, that a *Society* be formed for the purpose of aiding indigent young men of talents and hopeful piety, in acquiring a competent education for the **Gospel ministry** ; and a committee of six clergymen and four laymen, was appointed to frame a constitution to be reported at a future meeting.”*

At this subsequent meeting, which was holden at Boston, August 29, 1815, and attended by about fifty gentlemen, the constitution was reported, and after deliberate discussion, article by

* See Appendix to Dr. Worcester's Sermon delivered October, 1816.

article, was unanimously adopted. The Act of Incorporation is dated December 4, 1816.

From these facts it appears that this Society has existed, as legally constituted, but about nine years. Consequently, the public will not expect that it can yet number among its beneficiaries many, who have come forward upon the stage of public action. Excepting a limited number of the early objects of its patronage, who were somewhat advanced in their studies when that patronage commenced; the beneficiaries have not had time to finish their prescribed literary and theological course, preparatory to active service. Still, in the catalogue of ordained ministers, who have pastoral charges, or who are labouring as evangelists; in the bands of Missionaries, who have gone forth to preach the Gospel in the regions of moral darkness; and among the Agents, who are employed in promoting the interests of various charitable institutions; we already see the names of some, who are enrolled on the records of the *American Education Society* as her sons, and who have been raised by her instrumentality, to a sphere of active and extensive usefulness. A larger number still, have just completed their collegiate course, and are now engaged in the instruction of Academies, or, are pursuing professional studies in our Theological Seminaries. But the greatest number is still found in the first and second stages of their education, attached to Academies and Colleges in different parts of our country.

The whole number of young men who have received assistance from this Society since its first establishment, is 527.—Of these 13 are ordained Ministers, 10 are Missionaries, or in the employ of charitable Societies, and 11 are licensed Candidates for the ministry; making the whole number of those who preach the Gospel in one way or another, 33. Two hundred are now members of Colleges, and forty two are members of Academies preparing for College. The remaining number, so far as their present situation can be ascertained, is composed of those, who have just graduated, and are employed as instructors of our youth, or are pursuing professional studies. In this calculation however, we must make allowance for a small number, who, from the fail-

ure of health and consequent discouragement, or from other causes, have been led to relinquish the object of pursuit.

So much has been done. And when we take into the account the time during which the Society has been in operation, and the means which it has had at its disposal ; it must be acknowledged, that this result has exceeded the most sanguine expectations of its friends. It is to be remembered however, that a few years to come will, by the blessing of God, exhibit much greater *visible* effects of these labours, because a large number, who have passed almost through the preparatory stages of study ; but are still in a great measure hid from public observation, will shortly some forward into the field of active service. When we consider the number of those who have just completed their education, and of those who are now drawing near its completion, for whom the greater part of the necessary expense has been already incurred ; we may say, without boasting, much has been done already. And what is still more important is, that the experiment has fully demonstrated, that much more may be done. The practicability of furnishing a competent supply of christian teachers for our widely extended frontier and its growing population, is no longer questionable. All that is wanting is, the united persevering support of the friends of religion in our land. Indeed, it is entirely practicable for the American churches to furnish, and that promptly, their proportion of ministers and missionaries, for the evangelizing of the world.

The attention of the christian public will now be invited to a view of the method of proceeding, which the Directors have adopted in the prosecution of this design.

In the first place. It is the settled purpose of the Directors, to patronize none but young men who are *really indigent*, who are *hopefully pious*, and who *possess promising talents*. To these limits the constitution of the Society restricts every measure. And every precaution which could be devised, has been adopted, to prevent failure or imposition, in the execution of this part of the undertaking. That this may appear to the satisfaction of every candid mind, let us look for a moment at the standing

rules of the Directors, respecting the reception and management of their beneficiaries.

The following is one of these rules, viz.—“On the day preceding the quarterly meetings of the Directors, every candidate for the charity of this Society, in whatever stage of his education, shall, unless otherwise specially directed, be examined at Boston, by a committee of the Board, as to the evidences of his personal piety, and his motives in wishing to engage in the ministry, as well as, to his talents and literary attainments. At the same time he must exhibit unequivocal testimonials, from three or more respectable persons best acquainted with him, and his circumstances, (for example his minister, instructor, and a magistrate or some other principal man in the vicinity,) stating his age, place of residence, indigence, moral and religious character, talents, learning, and serious desire to devote his life to the Gospel ministry. If his examination and testimonials are satisfactory, he may be placed on the foundation for such assistance as the Directors shall judge expedient; and upon trial for three months, at the close of which period he shall exhibit from his instructor or instructors, sufficient evidence that in point of genius, diligence, literary progress, and piety, he is a proper candidate to receive this sacred charity.—Provided however, that except in extraordinary cases, no candidate shall be thus received, who is not fifteen years of age, and who has not studied the languages under an instructor at least three months.”

The examination of candidates for this charity who live more than one hundred miles from Boston, is provided for by the appointment of a committee in some contiguous college, which committee certifies to the Directors its satisfaction.

Concerning the foregoing rule it is to be remarked, that every applicant for this charity is required to produce the testimony of at least three substantial witnesses, who must be supposed to be well acquainted with the facts concerning him, and who must be considered as impartial as any that can be found. These witnesses must concur in the testimony that the applicant is indigent, that he sustains the reputation of piety, and that he is promising as

it respects his talents and proficiency. This is the first precautionary step.—The second is, that he is carefully examined by a committee appointed by the Directors, as to the evidence of his piety, his motives in wishing to engage in the ministry, and his talents and literary attainments until the committee are satisfied.—The third step is, that he is put upon trial for three months, under some suitable teacher, whose certificate, at the expiration of that period, that he continues to exhibit suitable traits of character for the ministry, is the requisite condition of his receiving further aid ; and the same certificate must be repeated quarterly for the same purpose.—And a fourth precautionary step against failure in any subsequent stage of education, is the following rule. “The principal Instructor of all beneficiaries and the committee who examined them, are constituted their joint guardians, and are expected to watch with due vigilance over their conduct, to see that they receive a thorough education, to guard them against imprudence in their expenses or in contracting debts, and in general against every thing, which would tend to violate the rules or defeat the object of this institution ; and finally to acquaint the Board seasonably and faithfully, with any thing manifestly faulty in their character or conduct.—This part of the subject is closed so far as the rules of the Directors are concerned, by the general rule that “ Every beneficiary as a condition of enjoying charity shall, in the whole course of his education, conform exactly to the constitution of the Society, and the rules of the Directors.”

If the persons depended on for information in the recommendation, and subsequent instruction of beneficiaries, are faithful to their trust ; it seems that the rules of the Directors leave little room for imposition or failure. It is true, that man, who looketh on the outward appearance, may be deceived, or may misjudge, after all possible precaution. To guard against miscarriage, so far as human prudence can do it, is what the Directors propose ; and more than this, a candid public will not demand.

Again. It is a settled part of this design, merely to assist young men of the above description in obtaining their education.

The Directors do not expect nor desire to afford them a full support, so as to supersede the necessity of exertion and economy on their own part. It is doubtless best that the beneficiaries should learn to depend principally on their own efforts. The assistance which the Directors afford them, is designed to be barely sufficient to help out their own exertions, and keep them from sinking in despondency. To effect this purpose, the quarterly appropriation to the beneficiaries, has been reduced from time to time, as experience has directed ; and one half of the sum now appropriated, is merely a loan ; which they are obligated to refund, when their education is completed.—Though there may be some instances of indiscretion in the use made of these benefactions, still it is a known fact ; that in most cases the beneficiaries, after receiving their allowance from the Society, are under the necessity of making great personal exertions, and of struggling with many difficulties and discouragements, to accomplish their object.

The President of one of the Colleges in New England, in reply to the charge, that charity scholars are proud and extravagant, speaks in the following terms.

“There may be now and then an instance, which furnishes some ground for these remarks ; but in general they are by no means wanting in point of economy.—Judge for yourselves.—The American Education Society allow their beneficiaries but sixty dollars a year.* This will do but little more than clothe them. Most of the young men have no parents to aid them, and no funds of their own. There is then their board, and washing, and fuel, and books, and stationary, and several other items, to be provided for ; even though all their college expenses are given in.—And these exertions they are not backward to make. Eight beneficiaries in our College last year, received for school keeping, near three hundred dollars. Could you see all the straits to which these dear youth are reduced, in their struggle to get forward to

* This was the sum then allowed at most of the colleges. Now, the allowance is seventy two dollars a year, and the same at all the colleges, one half of which is a loan to be refunded.

the service of Christ and his church, could you see all their discouragements and their shifts ; I am sure it would touch your heart. Their love to Christ and the souls of men, will not suffer them to go back ; and yet I have seen them go forward, with an eye lifted to heaven, and encountering difficulties which I am sure would make your compassions bleed. Some of them, for the sake of saving thirty or forty cents a week, which they know not how to provide, board themselves in their own rooms, and dress their own food ; which is but scanty fare. Those rooms, which daily witness their prayers for a dying world ; witness also the dry morsel which they consume alone. I have sometimes wished that the wealthy christian could look in upon that devoted youth at such a moment ; and I am sure he would think it a luxury, to do something to relieve a child of God, sustaining all this, for his love to Christ and the souls of men.”

In addition to the consideration, that the beneficiaries of this Society, from the small allowance which they receive from the funds ; are under the necessity of using all possible economy, to meet unavoidable expenses ; the Directors are disposed to encourage their engaging in personal labour, to provide for their own wants. The business of teaching school in vacations, or at other seasons, when they can obtain leave of absence from College ; has been most frequently resorted to, and has probably been found most productive. But, as this practice is some interruption of study, and is attended with hazard to health ; it seems very desirable that some kind of labour should be pursued, which will not interfere with the regular hours of study, at the same time that it affords the necessary exercise for the preservation of health. At one of our Colleges, the indigent students saw and split most of the wood for the whole College ; by which means they earn four or five hundred dollars a year. Some wait in the college hall, and thus save their board.

The question, whether some system of agriculture might not be adopted, in connexion with the assistance of Education Societies ; which would be productive and highly salutary, has for a considerable time occupied the attention of the Directors : and their views on this subject are expressed in the following vote, viz.

"Voted, That it is the desire and expectation of this Board that their beneficiaries in each stage of their education, should, as far as they have opportunity, employ at least two hours in a day, in productive labor ; with a view both to aid them in defraying the expenses of their education, and to the promotion of vigorous health ; and that their instructors be requested to direct and aid them as to suitable employment."

To mature a system of agricultural employment, which shall operate successfully, and be applicable to the situation of all the beneficiaries at the different Seminaries, will require much deliberation. But the subject will be kept in view, and the public may rest assured, that every thing which can be done, with any rational prospect of success, will be done.

The Directors have also, for the further security of their beneficiaries, and their encouragement in pursuit of their great object ; as well as to gain correct information of their proficiency and character ; come to the resolution, that they shall be visited periodically, by some member of the Board. This measure will afford opportunity for parental advice and admonition, both as it respects conduct and expenses.

At this visitation also, particular inquiries can be made of their Instructors, and of others acquainted with them, concerning their habits and appearance. By this means the indolent and extravagant, should there be any such, and those who are not possessed of the requisite talents, will be discovered and set aside ; while the diligent and promising will be encouraged. Especially, is this visit of a member of the Board designed to promote the spiritual views, and experimental piety, of the beneficiaries. The pursuits of literature and science, in connexion with powerful motives to excite worldly ambition, are found often to be unsavourable to the growth of vital piety. On this account the Directors feel, that special exertions ought to be made, and means used ; to excite in the hearts of their beneficiaries religious affections, and to impress continually upon them, their obligations to be entirely devoted to the service of Christ, and the interests of his church.

But it will be said by some probably that notwithstanding

all these precautions, cases of failure do occur, unworthy persons are patronized, money and labour are thrown away on those who are destitute, either of the disposition or the ability, to do any thing for the cause which they have professedly espoused.

Now admitting the truth of this, so far as it respects a few solitary cases ; and more than this cannot be pretended ; are we hence driven to the conclusion, that the cause is bad, and that the whole concern ought to be abandoned ? If so, why not abandon every object of human pursuit ? For in what department of human affairs, are we not liable to partial failure and loss ? The husbandman finds in his field, the withered stock and the blighted ear ; sometimes even in the very places, where nourishment and culture have been most liberally applied. But does he on that account conclude, never again to plant or sow his field ?

While then it is admitted, that some instances of misconduct do occur among those who are patronized by this Society ; the conclusion, that the great body of promising beneficiaries is to be forsaken, by no means follows. The fact admitted, should, as it doubtless will, lead to unremitting caution and care, in those who recommend, and those who examine the candidates for this charity ; but it will never lead any sincere friend of the cause, to relax his efforts.

At the same time, there is ample evidence that the friends of this cause have occasion for thankfulness and encouragement, that so many of the youth patronized by this society, do feel their obligations to Christ and his people, and conduct themselves to the satisfaction of their benefactors.

The President of one of the Colleges in New England, at which there are at present twenty beneficiaries of this society ; and at which, there has been a considerable number for several years past, thus writes concerning them. " We have been peculiarly fortunate in our beneficiaries. Not one of those aided by the American Education Society, has failed in character ; but one I think for want of respectable talents ; and one only to my knowledge, has injured the cause by extravagance."

The President of another College in New England, to which

the objects of this charity have resorted, says, "This system of charitable education is a great benefit to our Colleges. The collecting of these pious youth, and drawing them into contact with the other inmates of our Seminaries ; is bringing a mighty mass of moral influence to bear upon those, who are to wield the future destinies of our country, and manage the sacred interests of the church. It has a benign influence too, upon the order of our Colleges. In short, these precious youth are the salt cast into our literary Fountains. And who has not noticed the increase of spiritual blessings on our Colleges, since these Pensioners of Charity began to be received."

Other testimony of the same kind, and to the same purport, might be adduced were it necessary.

Indeed, it is believed that there is not a College in our country, to which beneficiaries have resorted for education, which has not furnished abundant testimony to their salutary influence ; and whose officers do not desire an increase of their number.

In view of such testimony, it is necessary only to inquire, who is most likely to know the real state of facts, in regard to the character and conduct of charity scholars ;—their teacher, who has them under his daily observation ; or the mere casual observer ; or what is still more common, the person who reports what he has heard, he knows not from whom, or on what authority ? And while it is admitted, that there are some examples of indiscretion and folly among those who are patronized ; must it not in candour be also admitted, that the greater part of what is said of the pride and extravagance of charity scholars as a body ; is mere vague unfounded rumour ? Are not the impressions made by a few unhappy cases, too liberally applied to all charity scholars, without distinction ; and has not the great majority, composed of those who are examples of sobriety, and patient continuance in well doing, been too much overlooked ?

But another objection comes forward on different ground ; and that is, that there are already more ministers in our country than can find employment or support ; and that to increase their number, will be only to multiply useless hands and disappointed

hearts. This objection may be considered as a declaration of what is now the fact, in regard to the superabundance of ministers in our country ; or a prediction of what it will be, if the work of charitable education goes on.

In both these points of view then, the objection deserves examination. As to the present state of the case, it will not be denied that there are unemployed ministers in our land ; and it is probable that there are those, who find it difficult to obtain employment or support, even though they desire it. But it is apprehended, that this fact has no bearing at all upon the question, whether our country is supplied with competent religious teachers, neither does it at all affect the question, whether we ought to increase the number of such teachers.

There is beyond all question, a class of persons having the garb of ministers ; who, through the blind partiality of friends, or the indifference of those who are commanded to “lay hands suddenly on no man ;” have made their way into this sacred office, without talents or qualifications suitable for it ; and who wander about the country, or hover around vacant congregations, seeming to say, “*put me, I pray thee, into one of the priest’s offices, that I may eat a piece of bread.*” These persons are of course unemployed, and would be, were the number of ministers an hundred fold less than it is. Their disappointments and complaints, it is believed, afford the principal ground for the objection in view. Such cases, though they afford occasion for regret, that any persons should so far mistake their calling, as to place themselves in these circumstances ; afford no ground of objection to the aims of Education Societies.

It is however not to be supposed, that all unemployed or unsettled ministers are of the above description. Particular causes, may operate to suspend the stated labours of some of the most useful and respectable Ministers. But as a general remark it will doubtless be found true, that those who cannot find employment, are those who do not deserve it.

A decisive fact in respect to this subject, and one which is derived from authentic documents, is, that though the number of

ministers has been greatly increased ; the proportion of unemployed ministers and candidates in New England, is no greater than it was thirty years ago.

If then, the objector means to be understood, that there are now more competent and properly qualified Ministers in our country, than can find employment or support ; the declaration is most unequivocally denied. Directly the reverse of this, is the fact. There is employment and support too, and not only so, there are pressing calls, for many more religious teachers of this character, than can be found.

The evidence of this is ample and of the most satisfactory kind. "A man who is at the head of one of our Theological Seminaries, writing in behalf of himself and his associates in office, remarks :"*

"It is a great mistake to suppose, that we have as many ministers as the population of our country demands, or is willing to support. Educate men of the right stamp, men of good native talent, and of ardent piety ; and educate them well ; and there will be no danger of their wanting employment. Every man of this description is instantly taken up the moment he is ready to enter the field. *We have frequent applications for Ministers at our Institution which we cannot satisfy.*"

The following remarks are from the professors of another of our Theological Seminaries, exhibiting the result of their experience on the subject.

"There is no reason to apprehend that the measures of Education Societies will produce too many ministers. The ground assumed by some, is not indeed to be admitted as the basis of calculation, namely, that the supply is sufficient when it corresponds with the actual demand, from destitute places. This principle is good in commerce, but not in religion. Had Christ acted upon it, one Apostle would have been as good as twelve ; for Corinth, Antioch, and Rome would never have sent for these

* Several items of testimony on this subject are extracted from the reports of the Presbyterian Education Society in the city of New York.

preachers ; and the wide world, at this moment, would have been ignorant of the Gospel. Pagans, and unevangelized parts of Christendom will never have the Gospel till preachers are raised up, who will ‘ go and preach the Gospel to them.’

“ But there are *not* preachers enough to supply the actual demand. From Missionary Societies, and from vacant places, in near and in distant states, calls are every year made on our Seminary for preachers, more than we can meet. In some cases these applications are expressed in terms of urgency that make a solemn and tender appeal to our hearts, while it is not in our power to furnish any supply. The truth is, that all the means now in operation by our Education Societies, and Theological Institutions to increase the number of able and devoted ministers of Christ, are very inadequate to the increasing, spiritual necessities of our own country. And still more do these need to be augmented, to keep pace with the spirit of the age, in sending the Gospel to the heathen.”

Here then we have the fact fully substantiated, that there are frequent applications for preachers, which cannot be answered for want of men. For who can be supposed to be better acquainted with the state of facts on this subject, than Theological Teachers? If there are unemployed ministers, of suitable character to be recommended, the Professors in our Theological Seminaries must be acquainted with them.

But let us look for a moment at some other sources of evidence on this point.

The Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, in a late report, speaking of the employment of Agents in their service say : “ But such is the demand for the labours of licensed preachers, that only the two persons whose names have been mentioned as new missionaries, could be obtained as Agents through the year.” And it is further verbally stated by a member of the Prudential Committee, that they have experienced the greatest difficulty in finding men, at liberty to engage in this service ; and that after every effort, they have been unable to procure as many as were desirable ; and in

many instances not half the number they wished. The question then occurs, where are the unemployed ministers in our country, who cannot find support? If they are of suitable character and qualifications to be employed, why are they not to be found, when all this demand exists?

Perhaps it will be said, they are in our new settlements, endeavouring to find employment and support there. Let us then hear the report of the case, as it appears to those living in our frontier settlements, and well acquainted with their circumstances.

The President of one of our western Colleges writes as follows. "As to the paralyzing suggestions that too many are on the education list, I am surprised that any christian with the general means of information, can be so unacquainted with the extent of our vast moral desert, teeming with ignorance of the plan of salvation, with error in doctrine, and with vice of frightful mien. So far from encouraging too many to become labourers in the vineyard, our Education Societies should exert every faculty they possess, till where there is now one, there shall be at least ten young men, of hopeful piety and talents, ardently engaged in preparing for the most important object upon earth."

A writer in the Boston Recorder & Telegraph of Nov. 1825, speaking of Michigan Territory observes ;—" Until the present summer I believe, no ordained Protestant Minister has been located in any part of this Territory. This Territory is fast filling up with settlers from New York and the Eastern States. Several thousand actual settlers have come in during the present season ; and there is promise of a still greater number the next year. Is there no Missionary Society, are there no friends of Zion who will encourage us to hope, that we also are remembered in their prayers, and that, while the sons of New England sit down among us, and hope to gain worldly riches, in the bosom of this fertile country ; we may also hear the glad tidings of salvation, under our own vine and fig-tree with none to make us afraid. If our wishes can be realized, then shall we and our children rejoice with you, then shall the wilderness blossom as the rose, and the desert places be made glad."

A Missionary labouring in the same Territory observes :—
 “The Lord’s people are desirous that the same means should be continued, and also that more Missionaries of the Cross should be sent over to help them. None, but those residing in this destitute region, can be adequately sensible of the need there is, that more heralds of salvation should be sent to this part of the Lord’s heritage. Here in the wilderness, where eighteen months ago no civilized man resided, the standard of the Cross is now erected, here are excellent ones, who love to meet and pray and sing and learn the way of truth.”

A writer, in the above mentioned Paper, says respecting the new settlements with which he is conversant,—“In these climes are a people not only willing, but waiting to hear the Gospel. They once heard it with delight, and those days, though far gone by, are not forgotten. They love the faithful Minister, and would gladly contribute to his support, but candidates cannot be found.”

From the reports made to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, it appears that the number of vacant Churches and Congregations within their limits, and in their denomination alone, was in 1819—400; and in 1823 it had increased to 769; making an increase of 369 in four years. These vacancies must have been chiefly occasioned, by the formation of new congregations and churches in the new settlements of the south and west. And in the most of them, it is but reasonable to suppose, the way is prepared for the settlement and support of ministers if they could be obtained. Thus it appears that instead of a present excess of ministers in our country, there is an actual and great deficiency; and that hundreds more than can now be found, of suitable qualifications, might find immediate employment and support.

But the objection under consideration may have a prospective view, and be regarded as giving the alarm, lest the country should by and by, be overrun with a race of mendicant clergy. But whence arises this apprehension? Will it be said that our population is stationary as to its increase, or that there are not vast Territories on our western border, stretching to the shores of the

Pacific Ocean ; to be peopled by our descendants ? Will it be said that, while the number of inhabitants doubles every twenty five years, there will be no room for an increasing number of religious teachers ? Surely no one, tolerably acquainted with the state of facts, can deny, that we have every reason to expect an increasing demand for labourers of this character. Neither will it be denied, that those parts of our country where this deficiency exists, or which are yet to be occupied, will afford abundant means of supporting religious institutions. They are among the most fertile regions in our land, capable of supporting a dense population, and of affording the means of enjoying every religious privilege.

The objection then must be founded on the apprehension, that the inhabitants in our new settlements, and in those regions of our country which are yet to be occupied, will not be disposed to employ and support preachers of the Gospel.—But what is the testimony of past events on this point ? It is but a few years since the greater part of the states of New York, Vermont, and Ohio were in the same condition, as to religious privileges, with those regions which are now opening still farther west.—And many of us can remember the time, when this very objection was alleged against all attempts to supply these States with religious instruction. The language of objection then was ; it will do no good to send preachers into those new settlements ; the inhabitants never will support the institutions of the Gospel, and will treat all exertions for their benefit, with contempt.—But preachers and missionaries went forth to sow the seed of truth, in what was then a wilderness, in a moral as well as in a natural sense. And what has been the effect ? Churches are planted, Ministers are settled and supported, elegant and spacious houses of christian worship are built, large congregations regularly assemble ; the Spirit of God is poured out upon them, extensive revivals and ingatherings are frequent ; and in no part of our country, are the privileges of the Gospel more highly esteemed or honoured. In addition to this, as the effect of ministerial and religious influence, we see flourishing Colleges and Theological Seminaries rising up in those places, to

diffuse the light of science and religion around them.—And here, the objector is requested to pause, and reflect on the present condition of the portions of our country above mentioned ; and then to ask himself, what reason he has to conclude, that Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and Michigan, will not be as ready to receive and support christian teachers, or that they will not experience as happy effects from their labours as New York, Vermont, and a part of Ohio ? And if there is no such reason, then what ground have we to suppose that preachers of the gospel, in vastly increasing numbers, will not be demanded ? Is it said that we must wait until this demand is actually made, and the way for the support of christian teachers fully prepared, before we take any measures to prepare the supply ? It may be replied, the demand is actually made, and the way for support actually prepared, beyond any means of supply which we have in hand. But if it were not so, if the field is to be tilled by the christian labourer before it can afford him support, it presents no obstacle or discouragement. What if Paul and his fellow labourers had waited for the fruit, before they sowed the seed of truth, where would have been the churches which they planted, and what would have become of the world ?

It is surely enough for us to know, that preachers of the Gospel will be needed in our country, and that, far beyond any present means of supply ; and to know, that, according to all past experience, their labours will be productive of support to themselves, as well as of the blessings of the Gospel to others.

Thus far then, we find no valid objection against the designs of Education Societies.

It is freely acknowledged however, that there are peculiar difficulties attending the operations of this Society ; difficulties which, though they evince no defect in the system, and present no insurmountable obstacle in the way of ultimate success ; still, need to be understood by the christian public, that this undertaking may not be exposed to an undue share of prejudice.

Some of these difficulties arise from the fact, that the scene of operations is laid in the midst of us, and all the imperfections which attend every system of human efforts, are here, open and

visible to all. The proximity of the scene of action, increases the apparent magnitude of every error, and causes it to remain longer in view. Difficulties, which attend benevolent enterprises on another continent, or in distant Islands of the Sea, are perhaps never known to the great body of the community at home ; or if known, it is only in a partial degree. Their distance divests them of many alarming aspects, and passing rapidly over the field of vision, they are soon forgotten.

But if a beneficiary of this Society is betrayed into any imprudence, it is at once discovered, and a thousand tongues are in motion to give it publicity. If a case of failure or apostacy occurs, the nuisance of such an example cannot be removed from public view ; but the apostate lives and acts among us, to grieve the feelings of friends, and strengthen the hands of enemies.

There is also another cause of embarrassment, which must not be passed over in silence. The objects of this charity are selected from neighbourhoods and families, in all parts of the country. By this means, the proceedings of the Society are brought directly in contact with many selfish and envious feelings, and thus become the innocent occasion of much prejudice and opposition. A youth is selected on the ground that he is hopefully pious, and is placed in what many consider a situation of distinction. He becomes a student, a member of College, and lives apparently at ease ; while his neighbours and their sons, who work hard to obtain a living, are called upon to contribute for his support. They imagine that he is becoming a gentleman, and feels proud at their expense ; and therefore resolve that they will give nothing to a system which produces such effects. This evil results, not from any defect in the operations of this Society, but from the mistaken views and narrow feelings, which inhabit individual bosoms. It is an evil therefore, which the Directors cannot possibly avoid ; unless they could communicate piety to all whom they might, on other accounts, be glad to patronise ; or unless they could enlarge the hearts of individuals, and prepare them to submit to this allotment of Providence.—At the same time, it is not to be denied that there are danger, and difficulty, arising from the influence of

these charitable operations upon those selected as the objects. The weakness of human nature exposes them to become giddy and vain from this sudden elevation.—For this, as well as for every other evil propensity of our natures, the grace of God is the only effectual remedy. And we have occasion ardently to pray for these objects of christian charity ; that they may be taught of God by his SPIRIT, and be thus qualified, in the most important of all senses, for his service.

The design of this Society and its methods of proceeding, together with a view of the objections and difficulties which attend them, have now been exhibited. It only remains then, that we take a brief view of the importance of this design, and the opportunity which it affords every friend of religion, and of the best interests of human society, to communicate extensive good.

At first sight, this design meets the approbation of every candid mind. The ministry of the Gospel, we know, is one of the appointed ordinances of God for the temporal and eternal benefit of man. Without it, we cannot expect to find the blessings of social order ; or the well grounded hopes of a happy immortality, existing in the world.

To provide then a supply of competent religious teachers, is a design, which must commend itself to every man's judgment and conscience.

Indeed, it requires but little candid attention to this subject, to convince every mind that something must be done ; something more extensive and efficient than has been done, to provide a supply of qualified christian teachers for our country ; if we would retain the character and blessings of a christian community.

There are *two facts*, which bring us unavoidably to this conclusion.

In the first place. A very large portion of our country is at this moment destitute of any competent religious instruction.

The evidence of this fact has already been partially exhibited in reply to an objection, and it has been frequently in different forms presented to the public, in all the detail of arithmetical calculation. Nothing more need be said, fully to substantiate the

preceding statement. It may however, not be amiss to subjoin a few simple illustrations of this fact, derived from the most authentic sources.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in their report of the state of religion within their limits in 1825, say,— “We would first notice the fearful extent and unanswered calls of our vacant territory in the south and west. A famine, not of bread nor of water, but of the word of life, presses them down to eternal death. As specimens of this wide and melancholy waste, the population of Missouri and Illinois, amounts to 160,000 ; and covers a region of country, 500 miles square. We have within these limits already eighteen churches, and yet, only seven ordained ministers, and one licentiate. In Mississippi and Louisiana are 230,000 inhabitants, scattered over 80,000 square miles. The great body of these belong to no church, and enjoy no ministration of the Gospel from any christian denomination. And in all this vast territory we have only eleven ministers of the Gospel established.”

A clergyman from the state of Ohio thus writes ;—“ the present state of our western republic, with regard to its religious institutions and religious character, is certainly deplorable. Take for example the state of Ohio. It contains a population of more than 700,000. And all the efficient ministers, of all the christian denominations in the state do not exceed 300. There will be then a deficiency (allowing one minister to a thousand souls) of 400 ministers of the Gospel in this state ; leaving a destitute population of 400,000.”

The result of the whole view of the moral desolations of our country, which is presented by authentic documents, is ; that there is at present a deficiency of 6,500 ministers ; after making allowance for the existing competent religious teachers of every christian denomination. And this deficiency is by no means confined to the scattered population of recent settlements, it is found in wealthy and populous regions, where churches and congregations already exist.

The Rev. Dr. Rice, of a Theological Seminary in Virginia

observes ; "I have heard a gentleman, whose word is as good as his oath, say, that in one district in our country, compact, rich and populous, there were 60,000 people connected with no religious denomination whatever. Another tells us of 180,000, without religious teachers ; and another, of a district of 100 miles in extent where there is but one settled minister."

From recent reports of Ecclesiastical bodies in the United States it appears, that there were within the limits of the Presbyterian church, 769 vacant congregations ; in the Baptist denomination, 1035 vacant churches ; and in the Episcopal church, more than 100. In New Hampshire, according to the latest accounts, there were 100 destitute churches ; in Vermont 81 towns, that had no minister of any denomination. These few examples may serve to show the destitute condition of our country as to present religious instruction.

In the second place. The other fact alluded to is, *that the population of our country doubles once in 25 years.*—If then, there were at present an adequate supply, and we might rationally calculate that this supply would continue ; yet, in twenty five years there would be double the present number of religious teachers needed. In fifty years, the number of teachers remaining merely adequate to the present population, there would be more than 30,000,000 of people in this country, destitute of religious instruction.

But when we take into the account the actual state of the case, when we reflect that there is a present deficiency of 6,500 ministers, and that the number of ministers, according to past experience, doubles only once in about 60 years, while the population doubles in 25 ; we can easily see the fearful consequences, which a few years to come must disclose.

Does any one call this an attempt at prediction ; or coldly say, we know not what will be a century hence ? The answer is easy. The common laws of nature teach us the connexion between cause and effect.

As a natural consequence of the two facts before us, we are presented with the appalling spectacle, of a nation, among the most

populous on the globe, descended from christian ancestry ; and yet, nine tenths of its population destitute of every species of religious instruction.—And who are they that will in all probability, and in a few generations, be thus destitute ? They are our own children, and grandchildren, our kindred according to the flesh ; whose salvation we now consider as far more important than every earthly interest. And must this state of things be witnessed in our beloved country and among our own descendants ? The answer is, it must, inevitably, and that in a few years, unless something effectual and speedy is done to prevent it.

Are we not then ready to adopt the conclusion of those, who first met at Boston to deliberate on this subject,—“ That all good men are called upon to unite in immediate and vigorous efforts to provide a remedy ? ” And shall we not agree with them, in the “ expediency of forming a Society for the purpose of aiding indigent young men of talents and hopeful piety, in acquiring a competent education for the Gospel ministry ? ” But if it was expedient to form such a Society, it is expedient and necessary to support it.

Is it too much to say, that on the success of this Society, are suspended the hopes of our destitute frontier, of our vacant churches, and of the multitudes of our children, who in future generations shall inhabit the vast regions of the west ? For if this Society should fail, what other resort is there, what other method can we devise, to provide for the wants of our land, which are already alarming, and are every year rapidly increasing ?

But, in estimating the importance of this undertaking, we must not confine our view to the wants of our own country. It is not to be forgotten, that our country, is but a small portion of a world that lieth in wickedness ; and that, while six millions in our own land are famishing for want of the bread of life ; this number is increased an hundred fold, when we survey the moral state of the human family. The time we hope is drawing near, when the dark places of the earth will be enlightened. But how is this to be accomplished ? It must be, through the instrumentality of preachers of the Gospel. But where are these preachers, and

how are they to be obtained? We do not expect that God will produce preachers by a miracle, any more than we expect that he will miraculously convert the world without them.

Bible and Missionary Societies have an important part to act in this great work of spreading the light of truth, but what can they do, without agents to accomplish their designs; and missionaries to carry the Bible to destitute regions, and to explain its truths? What in short, can any benevolent institution effect, without the instruments, which this Society proposes to raise up and qualify for the work? The Education Society, may then well claim a chief place among the kindred institutions of the present age. Other societies furnish the *means* and the *matter*; but this furnishes the *living Agents*, on whose instrumentality the whole work depends for execution.

Know then, christian brethren, that a Society has been formed for the purposes already stated, that it has been in successful operation for several years, that it has a large number of interesting youths now depending on its patronage, and that it needs the favor and support of the friends of religion in the community. And now, in behalf of destitute regions of our country and of the world, in behalf of the cause of Christ, which we all profess to love supremely; the appeal is made to every minister of Christ, to every church, to every friend of the best interests of man; will you not open your hearts to this subject, will you not receive with effective kindness and liberality, this solicitation? Will you not put to this work an helping hand, and consecrate a portion of your treasure to an enterprise, so clearly benevolent and so extensively beneficial?

Truly the harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are *few*. May the Lord of the harvest, through the liberality of his people, send forth **LABOURERS** into his harvest.

JOSEPH HARVEY, { General Agent in behalf of the
Committee of Agency.

- ANDOVER, JAN. 2, 1826.

The DIRECTORS feel it to be their duty in this place to repeat a Statement respecting the condition of the Treasury, which was first published in the Boston Recorder & Telegraph of last July; and to add a brief notice of its present circumstances.

The DIRECTORS of the AMERICAN EDUCATION SOCIETY, at their meeting on the 13th inst. found that the monies in the hands of the Treasurer for current use were *less*, by about \$600, than a sufficient sum to meet the usual quarterly appropriations. The sums heretofore granted have been barely adequate to the wants of those indigent young men who practise a rigid economy. No farther reduction could be made, without disappointment to all, and without real distress and appalling discouragement to some of these young men, nor without a very inconvenient derangement of an extended and complex system of operations.

The DIRECTORS felt constrained, under these circumstances, to make appropriations as usual, and to authorize the Treasurer to borrow, if necessary, a sum adequate to the demand. Such an exigency, though repeatedly apprehended before, has always been avoided by a seasonable appeal to the Christian public, who have in every case, promptly furnished relief. In the present instance, the want of funds has resulted unavoidably from the want of a GENERAL AGENCY for the Society,—an office which has been extremely needed, and which the Directors hope to see shortly occupied. In the mean time it is confidently hoped that they who are never weary in well doing will see in this simple statement of facts, an urgent motive to aid immediately the Treasury of a Society that has shared so largely in their prayers and beneficence, and done so much for the interests of the church. That to have these exigencies supplied it is only necessary to make them known, is the pleasing and almost certain expectation of the Committee of the Board of Directors.

WARREN FAY.

In addition to the above, it may now be stated that the Directors at their quarterly meeting in October last found it necessary to authorize the Treasurer to borrow a much larger sum, that they might make out their quarterly appropriations, and not interrupt the studies of those youth who are looking to them for help. This the Directors have done from the necessity of the case, and because they felt perfectly assured, from past experience,

that when the circumstances should be fairly made known, the friends and patrons of the Society would not wish them to withdraw or diminish their customary appropriations, but would promptly furnish the necessary means to proceed with this great work. It is to be remembered also, that another quarterly meeting is approaching, and that others will follow in regular order, when, unless our Treasury is speedily replenished, the Directors must be compelled to resort to the unpleasant measure of increasing their debt, or of abandoning the objects of this charity.

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